

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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USIA-15 AID-20 IO-14 DRC-01 /125 W

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R 250614Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7826

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 12829

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PING CB

SUBJECT: LON NOL ADDRESSES NATIONAL ASSEMBLY; NEW ASSEMBLY  
PRESIDENT ELECTED

1. ON SEPTEMBER 24, PRESIDENT LON NOL DELIVERED A SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NEW SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. HE FOCUSSED PRINCIPALLY ON THE NEW ECONOMIC REFORMS, DESCRIBING THEM AS THE RESULT OF LONG AND DETAILED STUDY BY KHMER ECONOMIC SPECIALISTS, ASSISTED BY "EXPERTS OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES". HE CONCEDED THAT THE NEW MEASURES WOULD CAUSE DIFFICULTIES IN THE SHORT TERM, BUT IN THE LONG RUN WOULD ENABLE CAMBODIA TO EXPLOIT IT NATIONAL RESOURCES BETTER AND PREVENT THE ILLICIT TRAFFIC AND SPECULATION WHICH SPRANG FROM THE PREVIOUS CHAOTIC ECONOMIC SITUATION. THE MARSHAL AFFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SEEKING BY EVERY MEANS POSSIBLE TO EASE THE SHORT TERM DISLOCATIONS, AND APPEALED TO THE ASSEMBLY FOR ASSITANCE IN THIS REGARD.

2. ON OTHER MATTERS THE MARSHAL: (A) SAID THAT ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PROTECT THE NATIONAL INTEREST WITH REGARD TO OIL; (B) CITED INCREAS-  
ING DEPLOMATIC SUPPORT FFROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES PERMITTING  
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THE HOPE THAT THE UN WILL UNDERSTAND THE LEGITIMATE

POSITION OF THE GKR; (C) HAILED THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FANK; (D) REITERATED THE GKR OFFER OF UNCONDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS; (E) ASKED THE ASSEMBLY TO TAKE THE NECESSARY JURIDICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL STEPS TO ENABLE IT TO DEAL MORE EFFICIENTLY AND RAPIDLY WITH COMPLEX BUDGETARY AND OTHER PROBLEMS.

3. THE ASSEMBLY ALSO ELECTED ITS OFFICERS SEPTEMBER 24, AND INCUMBENT PRESIDENT TAN KIMHUON WAS DEFEATED BY THREE VOTES BY UNG BON HOR. THE NEW PRESIDENT IS FROM TAKHMAU, WAS FORMERLY AMBASSADOR TO CUBA, AND IS RE-PUTEDLY WEALTHY. IN THE ELECTIONS FOR 1ST AND 2ND VICE PRESIDENT, THE INCUMBENTS WERE ALSO DEFEATED.

4. COMMENT: TO A CERTAIN EXTEND, THE DEFEAT OF TAN KIMHUON REFLECTS DISCONTENT BY YOUNGER, ACTIVIST DEPUTIES AT WHAT THEY FEEL WAS HIS FAILURE TO ASSERT THE ASSEMBLY ROLE AND PREROGATIVES, AND HIS UNWILLINGNESS TO OPPOSE LON NOL. HOWEVER, THE NEW PRESIDENT, ALTHOUGH LESS A MEMBER OF THE SOCIO-REPUBLICAN "ESTABLISHMENT" THAN TAN KIM HUON, IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE PARTICULARLY SYMPATHETIC TO THIS ACTIVIST GROUP; MOREOVER, THERE IS WIDESPREAD COMMENT IN THE PRESS AND ELSEWHERE THAT HE PURCHASED VOTES ON A CONSIDERABLE SCALE. IN SUM, THE ELECTION DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY TO IMPROVE THE AL-READY SHAKY REPUTATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.  
DEAN

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